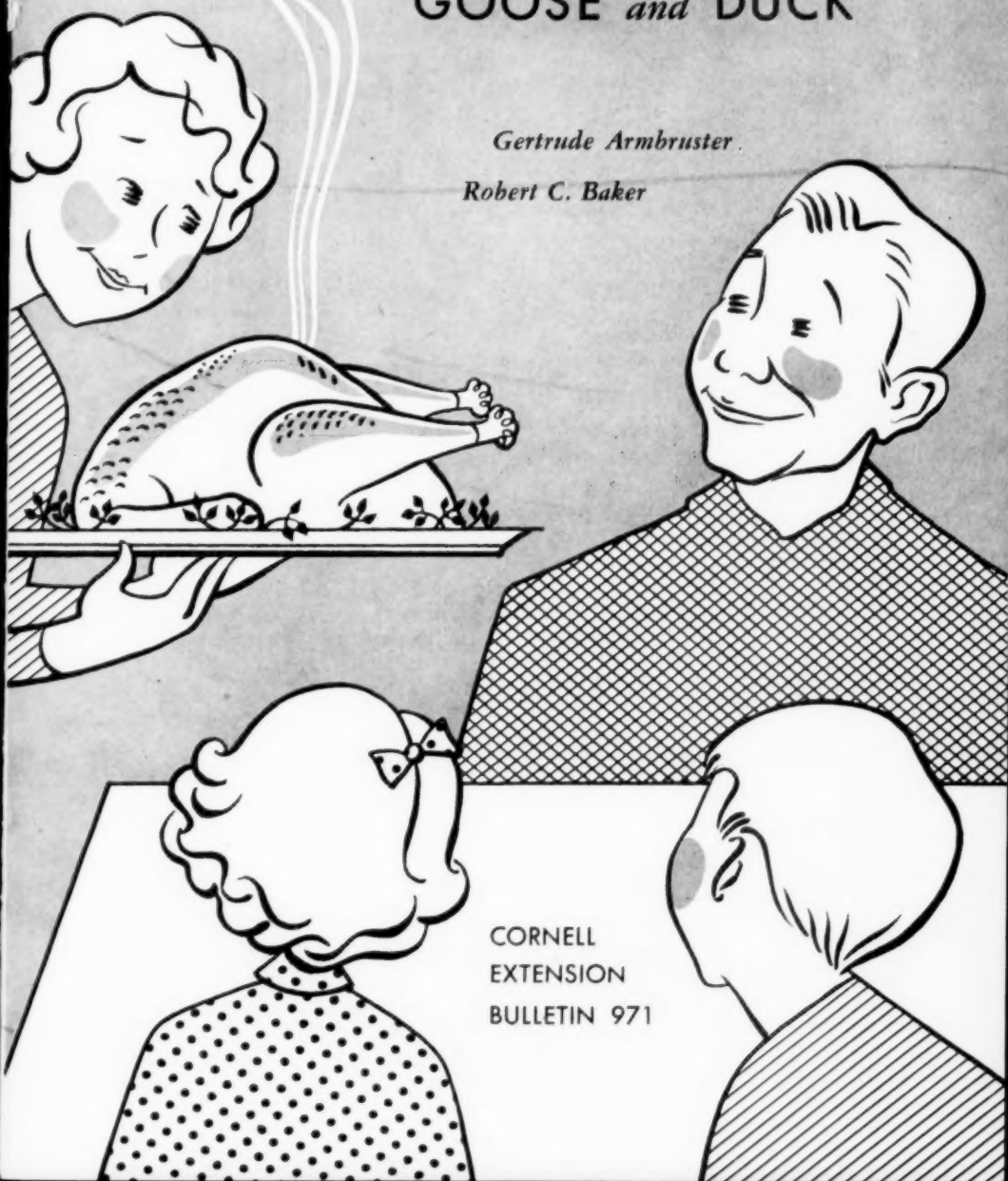


# LET'S EAT POULTRY

CHICKEN, TURKEY  
GOOSE *and* DUCK

*Gertrude Armbruster.*

*Robert C. Baker*



CORNELL  
EXTENSION  
BULLETIN 971

## CONTENTS

HOW TO CHOOSE POULTRY	3
Ready-to-cook	3
Whole or parts	4
Quality	4
Age	4
Poultry is perishable	4
How much to buy for each serving	5
METHODS OF COOKING	5
Suit the cooking method to the bird	5
BROILING	6
Broiled Chicken*	6
PAN-FRYING	6
Pan-fried Chicken*	6
BRAISING AND STEWING	7
Braising	7
Braised Chicken*	7
Pressure-saucepan method	8
Stewing	8
Stewed Chicken*	8
Pressure-saucepan method	8
ROASTING	9
Stuffing	9
Savory Stuffing	10
Stuffing for Goose and Duck	10
Fruit Stuffing for Goose	10
Apple Stuffing for Duck	10
Trussing	11
Directions for Roasting	12
To roast Goose and Duck	12
To roast Turkey halves or quarters	13
Timetable for Roasting stuffed chilled poultry	13
Pan Gravy	14
Giblets	14
Nutritive Value	14
CARE OF COOKED POULTRY	15
Roast stuffed poultry	15
Poultry fat	15
HOW TO CARVE ROASTED POULTRY	15

\*Turkey, goose, and duck may also be cooked by these methods;  
see specific directions, pp. 6-9.

DECEMBER, 1956

A publication of the New York State College of Home Economics,  
a unit of the State University of New York, at Cornell University.

# LET'S EAT POULTRY

CHICKEN, TURKEY, GOOSE *and* DUCK

*Gertrude Armbruster and Robert C. Baker*

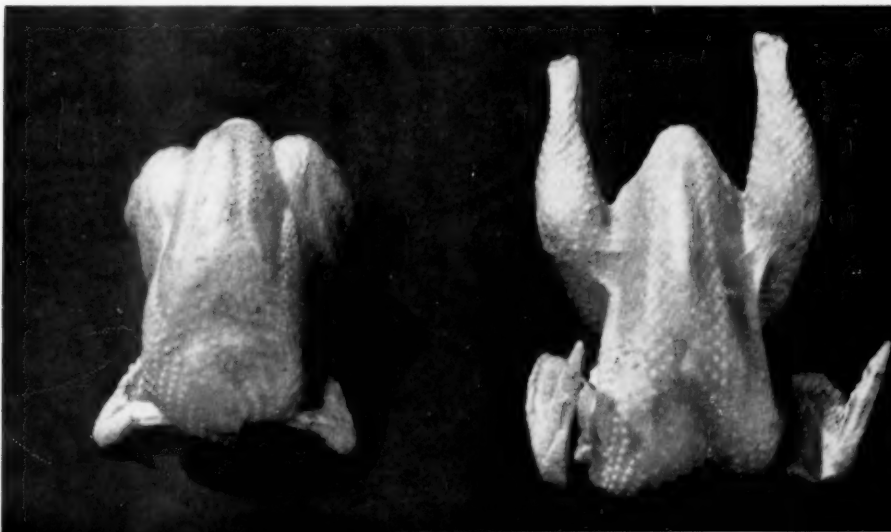
Poultry means good eating for you any day of the year. Poultry in a style and size to suit your family is available on the market when you want it for whatever method of cooking you choose—roasting, frying, broiling or stewing. Great strides in research have brought high quality poultry to our markets at popular prices all through the year.

This bulletin will give you information on selection and preparation of chicken, turkey, goose and duck. In many respects these four poultry products are treated alike. In a few instances, differences will be pointed out.

## HOW TO CHOOSE POULTRY

### **Ready-to-cook**

For best keeping quality and flavor select ready-to-cook poultry. Poultry prepared in this way has been bled, picked, and eviscerated (i.e., the head, feet and inedible organs removed). The giblets have been washed, trimmed and wrapped. When the bird is prepared for roasting, the giblets are usually placed inside the body cavity. The neck is usually packaged with the giblets. Ready-to-cook poultry is free from pinfeathers, thoroughly cleaned inside, and ready for the pan, saving time and work and sometimes money. Usually, ready-to-cook poultry costs more per pound than dressed poultry. Ready-to-cook poultry has the least waste. The shrinkage from dressed to ready-to-cook poultry is about 27 per cent. At that rate, you can pay about one-fourth more per pound for ready-to-cook poultry and the meat will cost the same.



### Whole or parts

Today poultry may be purchased whole, halved, quartered, or cut up into parts. The price of whole chicken may be less per pound than if you buy separate parts such as breasts or legs. But if you prefer more meaty pieces, it may be wise in some instances to buy the parts you like best.

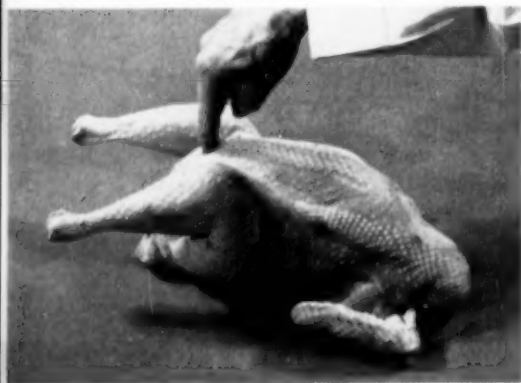
### Quality

It is important to know what to look for in high quality poultry. Top quality poultry will have the most eye-appeal on your table. To be sure of high quality when you are choosing poultry, look for these characteristics:

*Meatiness*—Plump body with broad, meaty breast and meaty thighs. This means more meat for your money.

*Fat covering*—A good fat covering which means tender meat. In poultry suitable for roasting and stewing, the fat is evenly distributed under the skin giving it a light yellow cast. Young poultry may not have as much fat covering the carcass as older birds have.

*Other important things to look for*—For poultry for roasting especially, look for a straight breastbone, and skin that is free of pinfeathers, tears, bruises, and discoloration due to breaking of the outer layer.



### Age

For roasting, broiling and frying choose young poultry. Mature poultry is satisfactory for braising or stewing.

*Breastbone*—This is the best indicator of the age of the bird. In young poultry the end of the breastbone is flexible; in older poultry it is rigid and firm.

*Skin*—The skin is also an indication of age. In young poultry it is soft and thin while in older birds it is coarse and thick.

### Poultry is perishable

Fresh poultry, like other meats, is highly perishable. Buy poultry only from markets where it is kept refrigerated. As soon as possible after buying, place poultry in the coldest part of your refrigerator. Cover it loosely with waxed paper. Plan to cook it within one or two days after buying.

Giblets are very perishable. Cook within 12 hours and use within two days. Store in the refrigerator both before and after cooking.

## HOW MUCH TO BUY FOR EACH SERVING?

Ready-to-cook poultry	Ready-to-cook weight range	Amounts of ready-to-cook poultry to buy for one serving*
Chicken		
broiling	1½ to 2½ lbs.	½ to 1 lb.
frying	1½ to 3 lbs.	¼ to ¾ lb.
roasting	2½ to 8 lbs.	½ to ¾ lb.
braising or stewing	2 to 6 lbs.	¼ to ¾ lb.
Turkey		
roasting	6 to 25 lbs.	½ to ¾ lb.
Duckling		
roasting	3½ to 5 lbs.	1 to 1½ lbs.
Goose		
roasting	7 to 14 lbs.	1 to 1½ lbs.

\*When buying parts, use the lower amounts.

While most poultry is available throughout the year, there are seasonal variations in the supply of some poultry. In September, October, November, and December, poultrymen are selling their layers which lowers the price of stewing chicken. Turkey prices usually drop during the late months of the year when the supply is greatest and may rise during summer months.

## METHODS OF COOKING

### Suit the cooking method to the bird

The method of cooking you choose—broiling, frying, braising, stewing or roasting—will depend on the age and fatness of the bird you have selected. Dry heat methods such as broiling, frying, and roasting, may be used with young, tender poultry. Use the braising or stewing method to tenderize older birds. Whatever the method, use slow, even heat for tender, juicy, evenly done poultry. Poultry is preferred when it is cooked to the well-done stage. High temperatures or overcooking may result in tough, dry meat.

### **BROILING (a dry-heat method for young, tender poultry)**

You can broil young, tender poultry successfully. Chicken broilers weigh from 1½ to 2½ pounds. They may be cut in half lengthwise, or quartered, or cut into pieces for broiling. Young turkey fryers or roasters usually are quartered or cut into pieces. Cut duckling into quarters for broiling.

#### **Broiled Chicken\***

*Time: 45 to 60 minutes*

1. Grease the broiler rack and adjust it so the chicken will be about 6 to 8 inches from the source of heat.
2. Preheat the broiler.
3. Brush both sides of the chicken with melted fat and season with salt and pepper. Place the chicken on the rack with the skin side down.
4. Broil. Brush the chicken with melted fat frequently. Turn the pieces as they brown.
5. Broil until the joints move easily and until the skin is evenly browned. Serve on hot plates.

\*This method may be used for turkey or duckling.

### **PAN-FRYING (a dry-heat method for young, tender poultry)**

Tender, young chicken broilers, turkey fryers or roasters, goose or duckling may be pan-fried. Usually the bird is cut up into serving-size pieces.

#### **Pan-fried Chicken\***

*Time: 45 to 60 minutes*

1. Select a heavy frying pan large enough to hold the pieces without crowding.
2. Use enough cooking fat to fill the pan to a depth of ½-inch.\*\* A good fat for frying has a "high smoking temperature"; that is, it does not burn or smoke until it becomes extremely hot.
3. Heat the fat until it is hot enough to start frying the pieces immediately. Do not allow fat to become so hot that it smokes.
4. While the fat is heating, roll the pieces of chicken in flour seasoned with salt, pepper and paprika.
5. Place the thickest pieces in the fat first, add less meaty pieces as the chicken browns. Turn the pieces as they brown. Do not pierce the coating as this will cause loss of juice. Tongs are a convenient tool for this.
6. After 15 to 20 minutes, lower the heat and cover the pan tightly. Cook

slowly for 30 to 40 minutes, turning pieces occasionally. You may wish to remove the cover for the last 5 to 10 minutes to get a crisp skin. The chicken is done when it is fork-tender.

\*This method may be used for turkey, duckling, or goose.

\*\*For goose, no fat is required except enough to lightly grease the pan at the start.

## BRAISING AND STEWING

### (moist-heat methods for tenderizing mature birds)

Stewing chickens, older tom and hen turkeys, mature geese or ducks may be braised or stewed. For good flavor and juiciness, select poultry with a well-distributed layer of fat under the skin. Poultry with bruises and abrasions on the skin is not considered objectionable for this purpose.

Poultry is usually cut into pieces for these cooking methods.

### Braising

For braising you can choose mature poultry that is past its prime for roasting but not quite in the stewing class. Likewise, birds too old for frying and too lean for roasting may be braised. This method is a combination of browning and cooking slowly in the juices or in a small amount of added liquid which results in tender, juicy and well-flavored meat. It is sometimes called the *fric-see* method.

### Braised Chicken\*

*Time: 1 hour*

1. Select a Dutch oven or chicken fryer with a tight fitting cover.
2. Coat the pieces of chicken in flour seasoned with salt and pepper.
3. Place in the kettle enough fat to cover the surface about  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch deep. Have the fat hot but not smoking.
4. Brown the pieces slowly in fat, turning to brown evenly.
5. Remove kettle from heat while adding  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup milk, cream, water or stock. Cover tightly.
6. Cook over very low heat or bake in a slow oven, 325°F., for 1 hour or until tender. More liquid may be added if necessary.
7. Remove the cover during the last 15 minutes for a crisper crust. Remove the pieces of chicken, but keep them hot, and make a gravy from the liquid.

\*This method may be used to braise mature turkey, duck, or goose. For goose, remove the skin and layer of fat beneath it.

### **Pressure Saucepan Method for Braised Chicken\***

*Time: 30 to 35 minutes*

1. Coat the pieces of chicken in flour seasoned with salt and pepper.
2. Brown them in shallow fat in the pressure saucepan.
3. Add about 1 cup of water. Adjust the cover and bring up to 15 pounds pressure, following the manufacturer's directions.
4. Cook for 30 to 35 minutes. Cool as directed for the use of your saucepan.
5. Remove the pieces of chicken to a hot platter. Use the fat in the saucepan for making gravy.

\*This method may be used to braise mature turkey, duck, or goose. For goose, remove the skin and layer of fat beneath it.

### **Stewing**

Stewing is recommended for mature birds that require long slow cooking by moist heat to make them tender.

### **Stewed Chicken\***

*Time: 2 to 4 hours*

1. Place pieces of cut chicken into a stewing kettle.
2. Add  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt per pound of chicken.
3. Add enough boiling water to cover the chicken halfway.
4. If desired, add 1 stalk celery with leaves, 2 bay leaves, or 1 small onion for added flavor.
5. Cover the kettle and simmer (just below boiling) until the chicken is fork-tender. Turn the pieces so they will cook evenly.

\*This method may be used to cook mature turkey.

### **Pressure Saucepan Method for Stewing Chicken\***

*Time: 30 to 60 minutes, depending on size.*

If the meat is to be removed from the bones for chicken pie, salad, or other dishes made from cooked chicken, it saves time to cook the chicken whole. Chicken, cut into pieces for serving, may also be cooked by the pressure saucepan method.

1. Place the whole bird or pieces in the pressure saucepan, add  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt per pound of bird, and about 1 quart of water.



2. Following the manufacturer's directions for your saucepan, adjust the cover and bring to 15 pounds pressure.
3. A young hen, weighing from 4 to 5 pounds, should be cooked from 25 to 30 minutes; an old bird, from 6 to 8 pounds, requires from 50 to 60 minutes.

\*This method may be used to cook mature turkey.

## ROASTING

### (a dry-heat method for young, tender poultry of any size)

Young, tender poultry of any size may be roasted. Chicken weighing from 2½ to 8 pounds is suitable for roasting.

Young turkeys come in a wide range of sizes suitable for roasting. The smallest are the young roasters weighing from 6 to 8 pounds and only 3 to 4 months old. Next are the young toms and hens. These are 5 to 6½ months old. The hens may range from 6 to 14 pounds, depending on breed. The toms may weigh from 9 to as much as 25 pounds. Turkey parts suitable for roasting are now on the market, too. They may be halves or quarters.

Ducklings on the market are 9 to 12 weeks of age, so that they are among the youngest and most tender poultry to reach the market. They usually weigh from 3½ to 5 pounds.

Goose suitable for roasting is 6 months or less in age and weighs from 7 to 14 pounds.

**The directions for stuffing, trussing, and roasting apply to chicken, turkey, goose, and duck.**

### Stuffing

Stuffing is a perishable food and may cause food poisoning if it becomes contaminated. Holding a stuffed bird even in the refrigerator is hazardous. Stuffing ingredients may be prepared in advance, but combine the ingredients and stuff the bird just before placing it in the oven. If giblets are added to the stuffing, they should be thoroughly cooked before adding.

For approximate amounts of stuffing, refer to page 13.

Sprinkle the body cavity with salt. Fill with stuffing. Do not pack it in because stuffing expands as it absorbs the juices that cook out of the bird. The cavity at the base of the neck may also be stuffed.

Poultry may be baked without stuffing and the stuffing may be baked in a separate greased container during the last 1 to 1½ hours of bird roasting time.

## Savory Stuffing

(Rich and crumbly; not moist)

*Yield: about 5 cups*

- |                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup butter or other fat | 4 cups soft bread crumbs (about half of a 1-pound loaf) |
| 1 cup chopped celery                  | $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon poultry seasoning                |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped parsley     | 1 teaspoon salt   |
| $\frac{1}{4}$ cup chopped onion       | Pepper to taste   |

1. Melt the fat. Add celery, parsley, and onion and cook for a few minutes.
  2. Add this mixture to the bread crumbs and dry seasonings. Stir all together.
- Note: One-half cup chopped chestnuts, hazelnuts, filberts, pecans, or pine nuts may be added if desired.

## Stuffing for Goose and Duck

For goose and duck, a tart or fruity stuffing is usually preferred. Some favorites are mixtures containing celery, onion, apple, cranberry or dried fruits. Sauerkraut or mashed potatoes may also be used as stuffing. When mashed potatoes are used, they should be slightly dry and may be flavored with sage, or thyme, or rosemary, or oregano.

## Fruit Stuffing for Goose

*Yield: about 9 cups*

- |                                     |                               |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 6 cups dry bread crumbs             | 2 teaspoons salt              |
| 2 cups chopped apples               | $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon pepper |
| 2 cups chopped cooked prunes        | 2 tablespoons lemon juice     |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped nut meats |                               |

1. Combine ingredients and mix.

## Apple Stuffing for Duck

*Yield: about 7 cups*

- |                                       |                                     |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 6 cups sliced apples                  | 1 teaspoon poultry seasoning        |
| 1 teaspoon salt                       | $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon paprika      |
| 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups dry bread crumbs | $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon black pepper |

1. Partially cook the apples in a very small amount of water for 5 minutes.
2. Mix seasonings with bread crumbs and combine with apples.

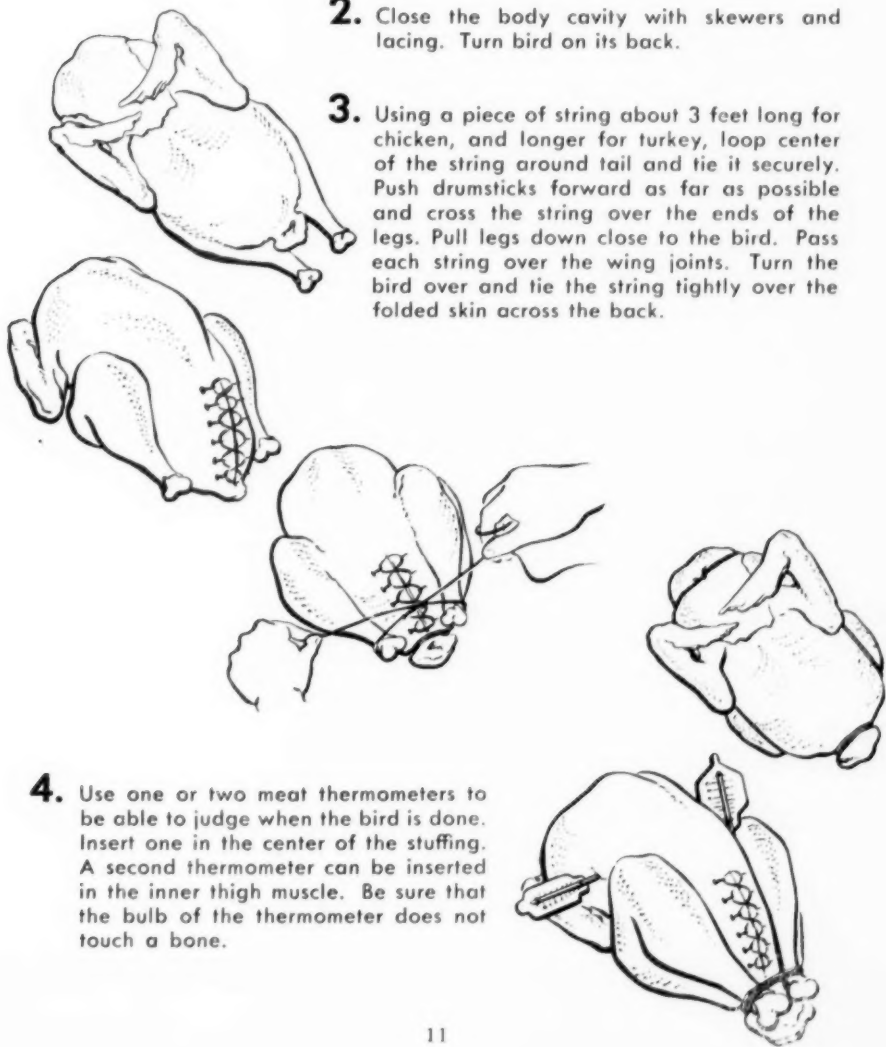
## Trussing

Whether a bird is stuffed or not, it should be trussed. A trussed bird will look more attractive, cook and brown more evenly, and will carve more easily than a bird that has not been trussed.

1. Draw the neck skin over the back and twist the wing tips under and up over the shoulders to keep the skin in place.

2. Close the body cavity with skewers and lacing. Turn bird on its back.

3. Using a piece of string about 3 feet long for chicken, and longer for turkey, loop center of the string around tail and tie it securely. Push drumsticks forward as far as possible and cross the string over the ends of the legs. Pull legs down close to the bird. Pass each string over the wing joints. Turn the bird over and tie the string tightly over the folded skin across the back.



4. Use one or two meat thermometers to be able to judge when the bird is done. Insert one in the center of the stuffing. A second thermometer can be inserted in the inner thigh muscle. Be sure that the bulb of the thermometer does not touch a bone.

### Directions for Roasting

1. Brush the skin of the bird with melted, unsalted fat.
2. Place bird, breast side up, on a rack in a shallow pan.
3. For uniform browning, you may cover the bird with a piece of cheesecloth dipped in fat. If the cloth dries out during cooking, add melted fat. Or, the bird may be covered loosely with a piece of metal foil. The foil should be loose so that the bird does not steam rather than roast. Remove the foil toward the end of the roasting time to brown the bird.
4. Plan to have the roasting of the bird completed about 20 minutes before serving time. This permits the juices to be absorbed into the meat, and less juice will be lost in carving.
5. Place the bird in a 300° to 325°F. oven and roast at a constant temperature. The following timetable will give you approximate roasting times using the 325°F. temperature. If the 300°F. oven temperature is used, allow the upper time limit in each case. Much will depend on the coldness of the bird when it goes into the oven. The amount of time needed to warm the bird before it begins to cook varies. The bird is done when:
  - a. the thermometer in the thigh registers 190°F. and the one in the dressing, 165°F.
  - b. you can move the drumstick up and down. The joint should not be stiff but move readily.
  - c. the flesh is slightly shrunken away from the skin and bone.
  - d. the meaty part of the thigh and breast feel tender and soft.

### To roast Goose and Duck

Follow directions for stuffing, trussing and roasting poultry given on pages 9 to 12 with these exceptions:

1. do not grease skin.
2. do not cover with cheesecloth or foil.
3. do not baste.
4. prick the skin in several places with a fork to drain off the fat during the roasting of goose.
5. spoon or pour off the fat as it accumulates in the pan.

### To roast Turkey halves or quarters

1. Prepare stuffing as directed. Bake in a separate container for 1 to 1½ hours at 325°F.
2. Sprinkle cavity and cut surfaces of meat with salt.
3. Skewer skin to the meat to protect meat during roasting.
4. Tie leg to tail piece and wing to breast.
5. Place turkey, skin side up, on a rack in a shallow pan.
6. Roast according to directions below.

### TIMETABLE FOR ROASTING STUFFED, CHILLED POULTRY\*

Poultry	Ready-to-cook weight	Approximate amount of stuffing	Approximate total roasting time at 325°F.
	pounds	quarts	hours
Chicken	1½ to 2½	¼ to ½	1½ to 2
	2½ to 3½	½ to ¾	2 to 3
	3½ to 4½	¾ to 1¼	3 to 3½
Duck	3 to 4	½ to ¾	2½ to 2¾
	4 to 5	¾ to 1	2¾ to 3
Turkey			
Whole Birds	4 to 6	¾ to 1	3 to 3¾
	6 to 8	1 to 1½	3¾ to 4½
	8 to 10	1½ to 2	4 to 4½
	10 to 12	2 to 2¼	4½ to 5
	12 to 14	2¼ to 2¾	5 to 5¼
	14 to 16	2¾ to 3	5¼ to 6
	16 to 18	3 to 3½	6 to 6½
	18 to 20	3½ to 3¾	6½ to 7½
	20 to 24	3¾ to 4½	7½ to 9
Halves and Quarters	3½ to 5	¾ to 1	3 to 3½
	5 to 8	1 to 1½	3½ to 4
	8 to 12	1½ to 2¼	4 to 5

\*From Handbook of Food Preparation published by American Home Economics Association.

## Pan-Gravy

*Yield: 6 to 8 servings*

- |  |                             |
|--|-----------------------------|
| 3 tablespoons fat  | $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt |
| 3 tablespoons flour  | Pepper                      |
| 2 cups liquid (meat juice, giblet<br>broth, milk or water) |                             |

1. Pour drippings into a measuring cup or bowl, leaving the brown residue in the roasting pan.
2. Separate the fat from the drippings. The meat juice may be used as part of the liquid.
3. Measure the fat into the roasting pan. Add the flour. Mix well.
4. Place the pan over low heat and cook, while stirring, until the mixture bubbles and is slightly browned.
5. Add the liquid. Cook, stirring constantly, until thickened. While stirring, the brown residue in the pan will be scraped into the gravy. Cook for 3 to 5 minutes.
6. Season. Add giblets. Serve very hot.

## Giblets

If giblets are to be added to gravy, stuffing, or fried chicken, they must be cooked before adding. In braising and stewing, the giblets may be cooked with the rest of the bird. The gizzard, heart and neck require moist heat and from 1 to 2 hours of slow cooking, depending on size and age of bird. The liver is tender and may be cooked by dry or moist heat for 5 to 15 minutes.

## NUTRITIVE VALUE

Eat poultry often because, like other meats, it supplies appreciable amounts of several important nutrients. One serving of poultry will provide considerable amounts of:

1. protein for building and repairing tissue.
2. iron for healthy red blood cells.
3. thiamine for appetite, good digestion, and general well-being.
4. riboflavin for growth and general well-being.

## CARE OF COOKED POULTRY

*Cooked poultry*, too, is very perishable. It is important to refrigerate poultry as soon after the meal as possible. To prevent drying, wrap well or place in a container with a tight lid. Use within 1 or 2 days for best flavor. If you wish, heat before serving.

### **Roast stuffed poultry**

Remove all stuffing from the bird and store in a refrigerator in a covered container to keep it from drying. Wrap leftover meat as above and refrigerate. Gravy may be refrigerated. Use gravy and stuffing within 1 or 2 days and heat before serving.

### **Poultry fat**

Poultry fat, when properly rendered, may be used for other cooking. Use the fat for sautéing and as a shortening.

1. Before cooking the bird, remove fat layers.
2. Cut the lumps of fat into small pieces and place in the upper part of a double boiler over hot water. Or, place in a shallow pan in a slow oven. 300°F.
3. Cook until fat is melted and free from membrane.
4. Strain, cover, and store in refrigerator.

Fat from stock or broth may be chilled and separated from the stock or broth. Melt, strain and refrigerate.

## HOW TO CARVE ROASTED POULTRY

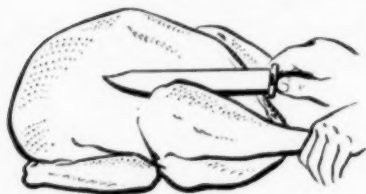
Carving roasted poultry at the table is an enjoyable art and adds to the festivity of the meal. To make the job easier:

1. roast the bird to the well-done stage, rather than overdone or underdone.
2. plan your schedule to allow the bird to stand out of the oven for 15 to 30 minutes before carving. During this time the meat absorbs the juices and is easier to carve.
3. use a platter large enough to give the carver plenty of working room.
4. use a very sharp, thin carving knife and a long-tined fork.

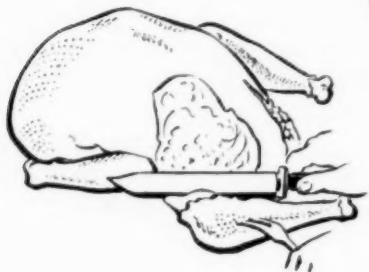
**You will find illustrated directions for carving  
on the back cover of this bulletin.**

## HOW TO CARVE ROASTED POULTRY

1. Place the bird breast-side up on the warmed platter.



2. Remove the leg first. Grasp the end of the leg bone with the fingers. While pulling the drumstick away from the body, cut through the skin and meat between the leg and body. Cut through the joint which joins the leg to the backbone.



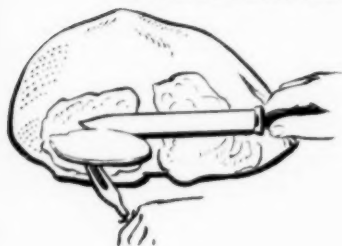
3. Separate the drumstick from the thigh at the joint. Slice the drumstick and thigh meat of large birds. Often a second smaller platter is used for this purpose.



4. Remove the wings in the same way as the leg.

5. Slice the breast meat.  
**TURKEY AND CHICKEN.** Begin cutting at the front and half way up the breast. Cut thin slices until enough meat has been carved for first servings or until the breastbone has been reached.

**GOOSE AND DUCK.** Remove the breast meat from the breastbone by cutting along the keel bone down to the breastbone. With the knife, lift the meat in one piece. Cut into serving-size pieces.



6. Carve enough pieces for all the guests before serving. The average size of a serving of meat is 3 to 4 ounces. With each portion of meat serve a spoonful of stuffing.